



Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs

Meeting Minutes
July 8, 2024
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Zoom Virtual Meeting

Commissioners Present:

Lee Blinder, Chair
Kijana West, Vice Chair
Nicholas Augustine
Joan Bryan
Josie Caballero
August Clayton
Kurt Doan
Debb Dunn

Anthony Fox
Nicole Hollywood
Tina Jones
Jabari Lyles
Paula Neira
Wendy Novak
M Pease
Sarah Stern
Joe Toolan

Commissioners Absent:

Mickey Dhir
Asher Kennedy
Stephen Martin
Mark Ridderhoff

GOCI Staff Present:

Jeremy Browning, Director, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs
Taylor Harer, Special Assistant, Maryland Commission on LGBTQIA+ Affairs
Lawrence Walker, Executive Director, GOCI

I. Call to Order:

- A. Meeting was called to Order by Chair Blinder at 6:04 PM. Housekeeping and Meeting Guidelines were read and acknowledged. Additionally, meeting attendees were reminded to add their pronouns to their Zoom names and instructions were provided.
- B. Remarks: Executive Director Walker provided an introduction as well as information on Maryland 250 Celebration and how we can use it as an opportunity to work together. He discussed the idea of a Maryland 250 Celebration Fair in partnership with GOCI, local governments, and civic organizations that are participating to showcase what makes Maryland special, honoring the contributions that each community brings to the state. Executive

Director Walker requested the creation of a subcommittee for idea development. He stated that this idea is still in its development stage and nothing has been definitively set at this time. The goal is to host this event in the spring or summer of 2026.

- II. Roll Call: Roll call was conducted by Chair Blinder and provided a review of the new voting procedures using the Zoom reaction functions to indicate vote (green "check" to indicate "yea" and the red "X" to indicate "nay" and no action to abstain).
- III. Agenda Approval: Chair Blinder called for a vote to approve the agenda and the agenda was approved with all in favor.
- IV. Chair Report: Chair Blinder expressed gratitude for everyone's time and presence, provided a brief recap of Pride events and offered congratulations to those involved in successful events, and stated the need to remain connected to the movement during tumultuous times. They provided encouragement to connect to the youth in the movement as they have much to offer, provided additional supportive remarks and noted the importance of taking care of one another.
- V. Vice Chair Report: Vice Chair West expressed gratitude for her involvement in Garrett County's first ever Pride event. She stated that now more than ever is a time for community, community building, and expressed how honored she is to be a part of this Commission.
- VI. Director's Report:
 - A. Director Browning provided his thanks to the commissioners and provided a Pride Season recap along with information regarding upcoming Pride events. He provided an update to the last meeting and stated that the Commission approved the HIV funding statement, no additional funding has been identified at this time. The Health and Wellness committee has been taking the lead on addressing this issue for the Commission.
 - B. Administrative updates were provided by Director Browning. Updates included:
 - 1. Two Spirit and Queer Indigenous Inclusion Workgroup meeting - July 22 at 7pm.
 - 2. Updates to the proposed Procedure for Bill Amendments will be made at the next Policy Committee meeting on July 16th at 6pm.
 - 3. GOCI Leadership Development Day will be held on July 26th, 9am - 3pm at the Crownsville office, attendance is optional.
 - 4. Provided an introduction to Taylor Harer, the new Special Assistant
 - 5. Reminder for next Commission meeting on September 9, 2024
 - 6. Commissioners were reminded of the legislative mandates that guide the work of the Commission.
- VII. Approval of March 11, 2024 meeting Minutes: Chair Blinder called a vote to approve the minutes from the last meeting. The previous meeting minutes were approved with one abstention from Commissioner Jones.
- VIII. Review: A review of Robert's Rules of Order was carried out by Commissioner Caballero. Questions regarding procedure were responded to accordingly.
- IX. Approval of Amendments of Bylaws: Commissioner Caballero made a motion to approve the updated amendments and bylaws and was seconded by Commissioner

Fox followed by a discussion. The motion carried with abstentions from Commissioner Lyles and Commissioner Clayton.

X. Mid-Year Review and Discussion of Priorities:

- A. Director Browning provided an overview of the 2024 Strategic Plan and the Commission's progress. . The Commission was told to look out for a questionnaire that was drafted by the Strategic Planning Committee to gather feedback in advance of the Strategic Planning Retreat.. Director Browning discussed the resource guide and its continued development. The Commission was encouraged to continue sharing the resource collection form with non-profits, community groups, and local governments for further data collection. Additionally, Director Browning discussed the continuation of collecting email addresses for the upcoming newsletter and email updates. He has been working with the IT department to make improvements to the website based on the recommendations submitted last year by the website workgroup. The Strategic Planning Committee recommended the creation of a mission, vision, and values in order to guide the commission's work in line with legislative mandates. Chair Blinder stated the need to find ways to fund the Commission's work.
- B. Policy Priorities: Commissioner Caballero provided an overview of the priorities and their importance in terms of legislative timing as well as encouraging the commission to begin looking at how the Commission communicates in regard to the policy priorities. The importance of staying involved in important discussions throughout the legislative cycle was also discussed. Commissioner Caballero opened the floor for questions and comments and the questions were answered accordingly. When the topic of interacting with the press and/or media was brought up, Director Browning stated the importance of using the proper channels in terms of information distribution while representing the commission.
- C. Symposium: Chair Blinder stated that a venue and dates are still being determined. Director Browning commented that the symposium will be a way to bring positive change to state agencies and recounted which agencies have already begun the steps for adopting the commission's recommendations and best practices. :

XI. Open Forum for General Remarks or Comments:

- A. Community member, Lydia XZ Brown provided an introduction and shared information regarding microgrants for person's of color with autism.
- B. Commissioner Hollywood shared the ongoing issue in Salisbury regarding the Mayor and his stance on both the Pride crosswalk and the Trans crosswalk.
- C. Vice Chair West shared the progress of Safe Space Cumberland.

XII. Closing Remarks: Chair Blinder noted appreciation for the time and attention folks bring to meetings, caring for each other, caring for how we do the work and the commitment to the personal and collective integrity of the Commission.

XIII. Adjournment: Chair Blinder adjourned the meeting at 8:01pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Special Assistant, Taylor Harer